

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) ~~For deterring an attack by an animal upon a user;~~
[[a]] A portable device for deterring an attack by an animal upon a user, wherein the device is easily carried by a single user, the device comprising [[a]] an inflatable figure that increases rapidly in size upon activation by the user, thereby scaring the animal and deterring the attack upon the user.
2. (Currently amended) The device of claim 1 ~~comprising an inflatable figure~~ wherein the device is fully detachable from the user.
3. (Currently amended) The device of claim 2 wherein the device is detachably associated with an item selected from the group consisting of: a knapsack, an item of luggage, and a walking-stick ~~wherein the inflatable figure comprises a molded and shaped inflatable shell.~~
4. (Currently amended) The device of claim 3 wherein the device is detachably associated with an item of clothing ~~the molded and shaped inflatable shell comprises a material selected from the group consisting of: a plastic material, a rubber material and a polymer material.~~
5. (Currently amended) The device of claim 3 wherein the inflatable figure comprises a molded and shaped inflatable shell formed from a material selected from the group consisting of: a plastic material, a rubber material and a polymer material, and wherein the figure is inflated by a gas released from a pressurized gas container.
6. (Original) The device of claim 3 wherein the device is fully inflated within 5 seconds.
7. (Currently amended) The device of claim 2 wherein the device is a self-contained portable unit that can be placed in a back-pack or side pocket of a knapsack for easy access, or carried in the hand ~~detachably associated with an item selected from the group consisting of: a knapsack, an~~

~~item of luggage, an item of clothing, and a walking stick.~~

8. (Original) The device of claim 2 wherein activation is accompanied by the production of a loud noise.

9. (Original) The device of claim 8 wherein the noise is selected from the group consisting of: an explosion, a horn, a whistle, and a shout.

10. (Original) The device of claim 2 wherein activation is accompanied by the production of a smell.

11. (Original) The device of claim 10 wherein the smell is a smell similar to that of an animal.

12. (Original) The device of claim 2 wherein activation is accompanied by the production of smoke.

13. (Original) The device of claim 12 wherein the smoke is produced by a pyrotechnic device.

14. (Original) The device of claim 2 wherein activation is accompanied by the launching of one or more projectiles.

15. (Currently amended) The device of claim 2 wherein the figure, when inflated is shaped is the form of a bear ~~type of animal selected from the group consisting of: ursine, feline, bovine, ovine serpentine, lepine, and ungulate.~~

16. (New) A method for deterring an attack by an animal upon a user using the device of claim 1, the method comprising activating the device wherein the device increases rapidly in size, thereby scaring the animal and deterring the attack upon the user.